

[illegible]

The Most.

THE OLD YEAR'S KNEEL.

Hark! 'tis Time that ring his bell,
A solemn tone and low;
He rings the old year's dying knell,
And wraps him in foggy shroud;
He hears him away to cavern deep,
Ere he's vault to sleep;
And eases out those who rejoice or weep,
At the knell of the passing year.

I mark the burden in my night,
That old Time bears along;
And through the darkness peers a light
The gloomy train among;
See! phantoms like, from his ashes rise
A form from off the bier,
Spotted as cheek of corpse of life,
Comes forth the New-Year form.

Hark! old Time doth ring his bell,
A merry laughing tone,
Such music as no tongue can tell,
Yet every heart can feel—
That still, "Forget the cloudy past,
A brighter presents and so forth;
Mourn not the sorrows of the last,
But welcome this New Year."

Then Nakadesa cried, "Shall I be clothed
To take the pelting storm,
Or shall I dine I long have loathed
Still seek my shivering form?
I've marked the daughters of the proud
In warmest garb appear,
Who heed not my appeals, though loud,
As they speak of a 'Happy New Year.'"

And Hunger cried, "Shall I be fed,
Will Bounty grant my plea,
Most I live by famine led,
While stomachs are so free?
The sons of Plenty oft have laughed
And chuckled o'er their cheer—
Ay! cursed be, for their wine they quaffed,
Will it be so this New Year?"

Then came Maltress, Sorrow, and Woe—
A gaunt and a haggard train,
And shivered, with agonizing throes,
For want of food and pain.
Loud and louder rings old Time,
To drown these voices dear;
Yet far they're heard above his chime,
They usher in the Year.

The Story-Teller.

Translated from the Italian for the Farmer.
FATHER CIPOLLA.

Certainly, as you may have heard, in a castle of Val d'Elsa, situated in our country, which, how small soever it may be now, was once the residence of noble and wealthy men. Then for a long time, there used to come once a year, because good cheer was found there, one of the fathers of St. Anthony, whose name was Father Cipolla. Here he would collect rich alms, from the simpletons who dwell there. Perhaps he was not less joyfully greeted on account of his name than his devotion, since that region produced onions (cipolla) famous throughout all Tuscany.

This Father Cipolla was of small stature, with red hair, a pug nose, a cunning countenance and was the greatest intriguer in the world; and although without learning, he was so good and ready a speaker, that any one who had not known him, not only would have considered him a great rhetorician, but would have said he was fully or perhaps Quintilian; and also he was the god-father, friend, and benefactor of all the inhabitants of that country.

In the month of August, according to his custom, he came one Sunday morning, and all the good people of the villages round about having come to mass in the chapel, he appeared in the pulpit, and rising said:

"Gentlemen and ladies, as you know, your custom is to send to the poor of our good master St. Anthony, a tithe of your grain and your corn, whether little or much, each according to his ability and his devotion, in order that the good St. Anthony may be the guardian of your oxen, your asses, your hogs and your flocks; and furthermore you are accustomed to pay, once a year, those especially who are enrolled in our company, what little is due them. All these things I am to collect for my superior, the abbot, who has thus commanded me; and therefore with the blessing of God, when you hear the bell sound, you will come to the church where I preach to the people, and you will kiss the cross, and besides that (seeing you are known by St. Anthony to be very devoted) by his special favor, I will show you a most holy and beautiful relic, which I myself have brought from the holy land beyond the sea, and that is one of the footstools of the angel Gabriel which he left in the chamber of the Virgin Mary when he came to the Annunciation in Nazareth." Having said this he returned to mass.

When Father Cipolla proclaimed these things, there were among the multitude in the church, two rough youths, the one named Giovanni del Bragioneri, the other Biagio Pizani. After they had laughed between themselves at the relief of Father Cipolla, as they had many friends of their league, they proposed to make some sport of this feat. And having heard that Father Cipolla was staying that morning in the castle with his friend, as they had seen him at the table, so they walked down to the castle, and went to the inn where the Father had put up with the intention that Biagio should hold the servant of Father Cipolla in conversation and Giovanni should chatter for this feat among the priest's chattels, wherever it might be, and to take it away, so as to see what he would say to the people in that case.

Father Cipolla had a servant which some called Guccio the Whale, and others Guccio the Caravel, but he called him Guccio the Hog. He was such an awkward scamp that not even Lippo Topo could ever have done anything worse. Father Cipolla used to laugh quite frequently about him, with his company, and to say: "My servant has so many curious things in him that he has the power to destroy all the virtues, the wisdom, and sanctity of Solomon, of Aristotle, or of Seneca. Think, therefore, that he is a man in whom neither virtue, wisdom, or sanctity is anything, he is so curious." Being asked what these curious things were, having put them in rhyme, he would say:

"He's lazy, filthy, false, merciful,
Negligent, stupid, full of evil,
A careless, faithless, sland'rous devil,

besides which he has many other vices, that it would not be best to mention. But what especially produces laughter is, that in every place he wishes to take a wife and hire a house; and although having a great, black, greasy beard, he appears to himself to be beautiful and charming, and he imagines that whatever woman looks upon him, is enraptured of him. It is true, he is of great service to me, for no one can speak so secretly to me, but that he will hear his part, and if it happens that I may be asked about anything, which I fear that I may not know how to answer, immediately he replies either yes, or no, as he thinks proper." Leaving him at the inn, Father Cipolla had commanded him to guard his things carefully, so that no one should touch them, and especially his middle-age, because in them were the sacred relics. But Guccio the Caravel, who was more desirous of staying in the kitchen than the nightingale upon the green boughs, and especially if he should perceive a certain maid ser-

vant there, whom he had seen among those of his host—a great gawky, ill-formed girl, the countenance of a strapping country milkmaid, all avery, greasy, and smoked—not otherwise than a vulture flies to a carcass, leaving the chamber and all the goods of Father Cipolla at random, he would descend, and although it was the month of August, having seated himself in the fire, began to enter into conversation with this maid, who was called Nuts, and to tell her he was a fine man for an attorney, and that he had more dollars than they who boasted of having them, besides that he had given to others, which were more than a few; and that he knew how to do, to say, as many things as his master; and without regard to his end upon which was so much dirt, he had built the great cauldron of Al-papier, and with his own doublet torn and patched, both around his filthy neck and under his arms, with more spots and more colors than ever were the Tartars' or Indians' clothes, and his shoes all torn out, and his stockings ripped open, he would tell her, as if he was lord of Castile) that he would recline here, and place or castle) upon her, and would snatch her from that obscurity and captivity of living with others and without great possessions, and lead her in the way of a better fortune; and other things also, which however affectingly they might be said, all turned into nothing, as the most of his attempts turned into nothing.

Thus the two youths found Guccio the Hog, occupied with Nuts; well pleased with this because no one opposing their labor was half done, and having entered into the chamber of Father Cipolla, the door of which they found open, the first thing which they came to was the saddlebag which was the wondrous; which having opened they found a little casket in a great envelope of silk, and opening this, they found in it a quill from a parrot's tail, which they supposed must be that which he had promised to show to his people. And truly he could very easily make them believe his story, because the luxuries of Egypt had not yet passed into Tuscany, and those honest people had never even seen or heard of a parrot.

The two youths satisfied at having found the feather, which they took away, and not wishing to leave the casket empty, and seeing some charcoal in one corner of the chamber, they filled the casket with it, and shutting it up, and replacing everything as they had found it, without having been seen, they began to watch to see what Father Cipolla would say when he found the charcoal instead of the feather.

The simple men and women who were in the church hearing that they would see a feather of the angel Gabriel at the hour of mass, if they would return to the house, one neighbor told to the other, and one gossip to another, so that as soon as each one had dined, so many men and women assembled at the castle that it could scarcely contain them, all waiting to see the feather.

Father Cipolla having taken a good dinner and then slept a short time, rose up a little after noon and seeing the great multitude of people come from the country, for the purpose of seeing the feather, he commanded Guccio to come up there with his little bells and also to take along his saddlebag.

Although with difficulty torn from the kitchen and Nuts, he went there with the things commanded, puffing and panting from the effects of the large quantities of drink with which his body was increased, and going above the church door, rang the bells furiously.

When all the people had assembled, Father Cipolla, without being informed that his sacred things had been disturbed, commenced his sermon, and when he had said many words in praise of his own deeds, he must at last show the feather of the angel Gabriel. Having made the confession with great solemnity, he caused them to light two candles, and gently unfolding the envelope, he laid aside the cowl, and drew out the casket. Then having said a very few words in praise and commendation of the angel Gabriel and of his relic, he opened the casket. When he saw it full of charcoal, he did not suspect that Guccio himself had done it, therefore he was in doubt whether he should curse him for guarding it so carelessly, or those who had done the mischief, but silently blasphemed that he had committed the guardianship of his own things to him, knowing, as he did, that he was negligent, disobedient, filthy, and stupid. But nevertheless, without changing color, he raised his eyes and hands towards heaven, saying, so that he was heard by all: "O Lord, Lord, he is my power forer." Then he closed the casket, and said to the expecting people:

"Gentlemen and ladies, you ought to know that while I was quite young I was sent by my superior into those parts where he saw first appears, and I was commissioned with the express command that I should seek until I found the privileges of the Porcellain, which now that it costs me nothing to declare, are much more useful to others than to us. For this thing I set out on my way, departing from Venice, and going through the borders of Greece and from thence on horseback through the realms of Garbo, and Balduca, I came into Pario, when not without anxiety I came to Sardinia. But why should I in imagination run over all his friend, as they had seen him at the table, so they walked down to the castle, and went to the inn where the Father had put up with the intention that Biagio should hold the servant of Father Cipolla in conversation and Giovanni should chatter for this feat among the priest's chattels, wherever it might be, and to take it away, so as to see what he would say to the people in that case.

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"Gentlemen and ladies, you ought to know that while I was quite young I was sent by my superior into those parts where he saw first appears, and I was commissioned with the express command that I should seek until I found the privileges of the Porcellain, which now that it costs me nothing to declare, are much more useful to others than to us. For this thing I set out on my way, departing from Venice, and going through the borders of Greece and from thence on horseback through the realms of Garbo, and Balduca, I came into Pario, when not without anxiety I came to Sardinia. But why should I in imagination run over all his friend, as they had seen him at the table, so they walked down to the castle, and went to the inn where the Father had put up with the intention that Biagio should hold the servant of Father Cipolla in conversation and Giovanni should chatter for this feat among the priest's chattels, wherever it might be, and to take it away, so as to see what he would say to the people in that case.

Father Cipolla had a servant which some called Guccio the Whale, and others Guccio the Caravel, but he called him Guccio the Hog. He was such an awkward scamp that not even Lippo Topo could ever have done anything worse. Father Cipolla used to laugh quite frequently about him, with his company, and to say: "My servant has so many curious things in him that he has the power to destroy all the virtues, the wisdom, and sanctity of Solomon, of Aristotle, or of Seneca. Think, therefore, that he is a man in whom neither virtue, wisdom, or sanctity is anything, he is so curious." Being asked what these curious things were, having put them in rhyme, he would say:

"He's lazy, filthy, false, merciful,
Negligent, stupid, full of evil,
A careless, faithless, sland'rous devil,

besides which he has many other vices, that it would not be best to mention. But what especially produces laughter is, that in every place he wishes to take a wife and hire a house; and although having a great, black, greasy beard, he appears to himself to be beautiful and charming, and he imagines that whatever woman looks upon him, is enraptured of him. It is true, he is of great service to me, for no one can speak so secretly to me, but that he will hear his part, and if it happens that I may be asked about anything, which I fear that I may not know how to answer, immediately he replies either yes, or no, as he thinks proper." Leaving him at the inn, Father Cipolla had commanded him to guard his things carefully, so that no one should touch them, and especially his middle-age, because in them were the sacred relics. But Guccio the Caravel, who was more desirous of staying in the kitchen than the nightingale upon the green boughs, and especially if he should perceive a certain maid ser-

vant there, whom he had seen among those of his host—a great gawky, ill-formed girl, the countenance of a strapping country milkmaid, all avery, greasy, and smoked—not otherwise than a vulture flies to a carcass, leaving the chamber and all the goods of Father Cipolla at random, he would descend, and although it was the month of August, having seated himself in the fire, began to enter into conversation with this maid, who was called Nuts, and to tell her he was a fine man for an attorney, and that he had more dollars than they who boasted of having them, besides that he had given to others, which were more than a few; and that he knew how to do, to say, as many things as his master; and without regard to his end upon which was so much dirt, he had built the great cauldron of Al-papier, and with his own doublet torn and patched, both around his filthy neck and under his arms, with more spots and more colors than ever were the Tartars' or Indians' clothes, and his shoes all torn out, and his stockings ripped open, he would tell her, as if he was lord of Castile) that he would recline here, and place or castle) upon her, and would snatch her from that obscurity and captivity of living with others and without great possessions, and lead her in the way of a better fortune; and other things also, which however affectingly they might be said, all turned into nothing, as the most of his attempts turned into nothing.

Thus the two youths found Guccio the Hog, occupied with Nuts; well pleased with this because no one opposing their labor was half done, and having entered into the chamber of Father Cipolla, the door of which they found open, the first thing which they came to was the saddlebag which was the wondrous; which having opened they found a little casket in a great envelope of silk, and opening this, they found in it a quill from a parrot's tail, which they supposed must be that which he had promised to show to his people. And truly he could very easily make them believe his story, because the luxuries of Egypt had not yet passed into Tuscany, and those honest people had never even seen or heard of a parrot.

The two youths satisfied at having found the feather, which they took away, and not wishing to leave the casket empty, and seeing some charcoal in one corner of the chamber, they filled the casket with it, and shutting it up, and replacing everything as they had found it, without having been seen, they began to watch to see what Father Cipolla would say when he found the charcoal instead of the feather.

The simple men and women who were in the church hearing that they would see a feather of the angel Gabriel at the hour of mass, if they would return to the house, one neighbor told to the other, and one gossip to another, so that as soon as each one had dined, so many men and women assembled at the castle that it could scarcely contain them, all waiting to see the feather.

Father Cipolla having taken a good dinner and then slept a short time, rose up a little after noon and seeing the great multitude of people come from the country, for the purpose of seeing the feather, he commanded Guccio to come up there with his little bells and also to take along his saddlebag.

Although with difficulty torn from the kitchen and Nuts, he went there with the things commanded, puffing and panting from the effects of the large quantities of drink with which his body was increased, and going above the church door, rang the bells furiously.

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